

CHELMSFORD AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER No.224

October 1984

NEXT MEETING

The constitution of the Society requires that the Annual General Meeting takes place in October. The next A.G.M is therefore scheduled for October 2nd at 7.30 p.m. at the Marconi College, Arbour Lane, Chelmsford. This is a most important meeting when the activities of the club, past, present and future will be discussed in addition to the election of a new committee. Any nominations or items for discussion should be sent to our President Roy, G3PMX, before the meeting.

If time permits at the end of the A.G.M, a "Mystery Object" contest will be held. This will involve the identification of numerous electronic objects hidden in cloth bags. This proved to be quite amusing on the first run and will get us into trim for the party season!, there will be a prize for the winner.

COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday October 10th, 7.30 p.m. in the bar of Marconi Residence.

MEETINGS TO COME

November - RTTY, AMTOR and Packet Radio. In the pipe line 10m F.M. and a talk about 2 metre contest operating.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

It is quite some time since we had a membership survey and with the A.G.M. next month the new committee would like some ideas as to the type of programme to organise for the coming year. With this newsletter you will find an individually numbered survey sheet for completion and return at the A.G.M. Please think carefully about YOUR Society and give the new committee a real task of organisation. As a bonus there will be a draw for the "Lucky Number" survey reply after the A.G.M, the prize being A YEARS FREE SUBSCRIPTION.

ESSEX REPEATER GROUP

The Society has received acknowledgement of the £10 recently donated and also notification of the forthcoming E.R.G. Annual General Meeting, this will be held at the Village Hall, Danbury on 1st October 1984 at 8.00 p.m.

REPORT ON LAST MONTHS MEETING

John Donnithorne G8MKX took the rostrum as Auctioneer at about 7.50 for the annual reorganisation of Chelmsfords Junk. He started with the larger objects, being a couple of power supplies. Despite being superbly engineered, one was sold for 25p for the 13A mains plug attached, and another sold for a similar amount for the case! A 12V 2.5A power supply however raised £4. It was archive evening as a few new (and boxed!) flexible couples of 1930 vintage raised 10p each. A set of antique wavemeters went for £1, a real bargain if only for the brass they contained. Some new items were sold though, a brand new boxed QQV06-40 raised £1.80 and a QQV03-10, 20p. Choc-blocks were plentiful at 20p a handfull and a bargain-basement junk box was given away for 5p (poor dustman). An amusing incident occurred when a P.C.B. packed with heatsinks raised only 10p, and John Bowen was heard to groan "cor, I lost a quid on that". In all a good junk sale, although there was not so much junk this time as we have seen in the past, but the Society funds benefited to the tune of £14.

VISIT TO ESSEX RADIO STUDIOS

On the evening of Tuesday, September 18th four cars and their occupants set off for Southend, all maintaining radio contact on 144.725MHz F.M. Some cars knew where they were going, and some did not, sticking to the car in front like glue. The cars that arrived first gave talk in to the following members. We all parked in the spacious car park at the rear of the studios.

After introductions we were first shown inside the Outside Broadcast Vehicle by the engineer who built it, Vince Maddex, G8YPK. The vehicle is essentially a mobile studio, and can be used to record live concerts etc. It is used at "Roadshows" and exhibitions such as the Essex Show. It contains mixers for the microphones, tape decks, record decks and cartridge machines used for playing pre-recorded information and ads. The entire programme is put together in the vehicle and send back to Southend or Danbury on 141MHz. The vehicle can communicate with the studio and with a reporter via a back-pack link on 212MHz. The van is fitted with a 30' pneumatic mast for the yagi antenna used to send the programme to the studio otherwise landline is utilised. The recording facilities include a closed circuit television for monitoring the stage or set which most times is out of view.

VISIT TO ESSEX RADIO - continued,

On entering the building we were shown into the news room, with a teleprinter chattering continuously. The station is permanently linked to I.R.N. (Independant Radio News) and can use the three minute broadcast from London each hour or use extracts combined with its own local news.

We then went downstairs and were shown four studios of varying sizes, Dave Gregory was in one of the smaller ones presenting his show. We were shown in detail one of the larger studios where two consoles provide for Presenter and a Producer. There was also a table with microphones for guests. The consoles have masses of controls which looked bewildering, but Vince assured us that they were easy to use once you had got used to them. The operator has two record decks and five cartridge machines as well as being able to fade in and out the other items such as news and telephone calls. Push buttons enable the Presenter to compare the signals leaving the studio with the "off-air" signal from the transmitters. A demonstration was given, and there was no detectable difference in the signal on VHF, the medium wave signal was a very different story!. The cart machines are clever devices, being able to cue up the tape ready for the next play, the carts themselves being a continuous loop of tape. We then went to the newest studio, only just completed. This is used to record the cartridges (the recorder costing £4000). Other production work can be done using two remote controlled tape decks and a couple of record decks. A host of facilities are available using a 12 track mixer. The studio also has the same facilities as the other studios, in that it can be used to present a show.

We then went to the engineering workshop, where construction, modification and service of all the equipment is carried out. An impressive array of test equipment adorned the shelves including a CR100 receiver! Various items of 2m equipment were also evident, as some of the engineers are licensed amateurs. A wall map showed all the Outside Broadcast sites with coloured pins to indicate the strength of the signal back to Southend or Danbury. The last place we visited was the "racks room". Here was the equipment used to send the studio signals to the transmitters at Southend and Chelmsford. There are monitoring and fault finding facilities as well as the continuous logging tape. The 'delay' equipment was also here - useful for phone-in programmes! - each studio has a dump button.

Finally we went upstairs to the Foyer for a farewell chat with Vince before leaving about 10.00 p.m. Our thanks to Bill Cole for organising a very interesting tour of the Radio Station and of course to Vince for giving up an evening to show us round.

DF NEWS - 1 RSGB QUALIFYING EVENT - Dick G3WHR

Under a threatening sky 21 teams assembled at Fordham Heath for the Chelmsford/Colchester Qualifying event. Both signals were audible, though at different strengths. Most competitors chose to find the weaker signal 'A' station first. Mike Hawkins had concealed the A transmitter East of the start in dense blackthorn at Strandlands on the S bank of the river Stour. A decoy car parked at the entrance to nearby Slow wood caused some teams to leave their cars over 1 mile from the transmitter. Ian Butson chose a site near Tiptree for the B station. Since it was only 6 miles from the start, the transmitter was operated on reduced power - this fooled nobody. However, a long antenna with multiple tee-ins led antenna followers to investigate several muddy and prickly areas. Competitors and operators, except Pat Hawkins, were fortunate to gain the shelter of the Pub before a violent thunderstorm occurred. Whilst the rain pelted down - we all enjoyed an excellent tea. I hoped we would have had more qualifiers from local clubs but the result was the same as last year. Results:-

1, D.Newman	Slade	1552 Q	12, T.Gage	Mid Thames	1621
2, P.Tyler	Mid Thames	1554 Q	13, Larbalestier	Colchester	1621.5
3, C.Plummer	Mid Thames	1555	14, R.DeLaRue	Colchester	1621.75
4, N.Woodley	Mid Thames	1600	15, R.Goodearl	Mid Thames	1622
5, G.Whenham	Coventry	1600.25	16, B.Mephram	Mid Thames	1630
6, B.Poole	Mid Thames	1600.50	17, W.Pechey	Mid Thames	1629.75
7, C.Merry	Dartford Hth	1608	18, R.Emeny	Colchester	1524.50*
8, E.Mollart	Mid Thames	1612	19, P.Wollett	Dartford Hth	1612*
9, A.Williams	Braintree	1613	20, P.Cranmer	Colchester	1630*
10, A.Judd	Mid Thames	1614	21, G.Foster	Stratford	----
11, P.Clark	Chelmsford	1617			

Q = Qualify for final. * = 1 Station only.

DF NEWS - 2. SEPTEMBER EVENT

Dick hid G3WHR/P near Goldhanger, in some bushes alongside playing fields. Despite a very long antenna, the hunters had no problems in finding the tx - providing it was transmitting. Those who arrived during a no-signal period had a long walk to the far end of the aerial and back. Results:-

1, P.Larbalestier	801	4, A.Williams	821
2, M.Hawkins	802	5, J.Herbert	822
3, I.Butson	820	6, R.Emeny	823

October 14th features the Sunday Event with 2 stations to find under RSGB rules. The winner will be awarded the Mid Essex Trophy. Start details will be announced at the club meeting - or phone me.

AROUND THE HF BANDS - Gwyn G4FKH

As the sunspot cycle is not at its most productive, one would not expect too much from the HF bands. However, with a decent Rx and a well made "short G5RV", there is a lot to excite the radio amateur. ZL is about on 40m in the morning and evening for those with patience and a working ability on the key, on the higher bands LU, PY, W's and VE's are around on occasions, not to mention JA's. Of course I am unable to comment on the SSB conditions but would certainly suggest that anyone can get decent CW contacts on bands up to 21MHz, if one cares to make the trip. Even for the novice all of Europe is obtainable on 40m within about 2 evenings, which is how I amuse myself when the going gets rough for DX. At the end of September, beginning of October "Autumnal Equinox" one would be surprised with the distances that will be possible on 80m with a half decent antenna. Good DXing.

BANK HOLIDAY - ERIC G8ADX

Recently Kate and I took a few days holiday to visit the Matlock area of Derbyshire. We used the A1 and found this route much more restful than the M1 rat-race and probably just as quick. The area has much to offer for all members of any family, such as Chatsworth, Haddon Hall, the finest example of a mediieval house in Britain, caves, mines, restored and working trams, steam trains, and not forgetting the beautiful Peak District.

Having satisfied the family with this vast selection I am sure that they would not grudge the OM a trip up the hill to that famous emporium, Lowes, where there is a large range of equipment, all on working demonstration and operated by the genial host David, G4KFN. I was particularly impressed by the Scanning Receiver AR2001, covering 25-550MHz (no gaps). I finally succumbed to a 2M, 7/8 mobile antenna on a gutter mount (tools loaned for instant installation!).

Some of the staff have put together an information board showing the local points of interest and beauty spots, particularly those with good radiation coverage! My only regret was not taking the 9130 and a portable antenna. If it is any recommendation we are determined to revisit the area to see more, I wonder what piece of gear I'll be tempted to buy next time?

VISIT TO P.L.A.

The recent visit by members to the Port of London Authority at Gravesend will be reported next month.

73, Andrew.

Witham 512316 (Day)
Silver End 83094 (any other time)

9, Abraham Drive,
Silver End, Witham.

FOR SALE

Yaesu FT200/FP200 AC PSU-speaker. G3LLL RF clipper. Spare PA's and 7360 bal/mod. £200 o.n.o. Martin G4T00 Phone 0245-84485

WANTED

I bought 3 cavity wavemeters at the September junk sale, viz 300-350, 350-400 and 450-650 Mc/s. They are too good to scrap and justify preservation for their historical value.

Has anyone got the missing one, 400-450 Mc/s?

Has anyone a suitable indicating meter (3 off required)? The specification is :- plug-in, 2" round, 1" deep, 3/16" pins set on a diameter with 1" centre spacing. Meter resistance and FSD are unknown but the wavemeters have a built-in cartridge diode of WW2 vintage similar to 1N21 series, hence FSD probably about 1mA. John Greenwood, G3KRZ, 01-357-4248

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LUCKY NUMBER Membership Survey

October 1984

In order to plan future meetings, outings and events, the committee request that you complete the following survey. If we know your interests we will be able to arrange activities to suit the majority of members.

In addition YOU could be the winner of the prize, which is a year's free subscription to C.A.R.S. All completed Survey Sheets returned to the secretary by the AGM will go into a number draw on the same evening.

Where indicated, 0 to 5 is interest from low to high.

1. Principal operating bands (including listening for SWL's). 0 TO 5

HF 160-80-40-30-20m

HF 18-15-12-10m

VHF 6-4-2m

UHF 70-23cm

Microwave

2. Principal interests. 0 to 5

CW - SSB - FM

RTTY/Computing (Machine?.....)

TV Slow - Fast scan

Meteor scatter

Satellites

Contest operating

DF hunting

Equipment construction

RSGB News broadcasts

Rallies

3. General information, requests, comments.

Are you a member of RSGB Yes/No

If SWL, are you studying for RAE Yes/No

If Class B licence, are you studying for Class A Yes/No

Do you need help with CW Yes/No

If you could nominate a meeting, what would it be?....

Where would you like to go on an outing?....

Comments....

Name..... Callsign.....

Thank you for your time - good luck in the draw - PLEASE NOTE YOUR No.